

# A Day for Love's Independence

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Summary: Based more on the movie version of "Shane" than the book....a short but intense romantic moment between Marian and Shane...if you read, please review!!!

## A Day for Love's Independence

> <meta name="ProgId"> NOTE TO READERS: I know that this fanfic borrows more from the movie "Shane" than the book by Jack Schaefer

\*\*NOTE TO READERS: I know that this fanfic borrows more from the movie "Shane" than the book by Jack Schaefer. However, there is no category in the Movie section as of yet where I can post this story, so it has to go here in Books. I have taken a little scene from the movie and elaborated. Maybe it was more than just a little dance for Marian and Shane.\*\*

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\*\*A Day for Love's Independence\*\*

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\*\* Today was Independence Day, one day when everyone in the Valley could forget their problems and take the time to celebrate. And everyone in the Valley had their own special successes to celebrate, no matter how big or how small. A man works hard enough, and he will find success. A man searches long enough, he will find something worth staying to care for. A woman wonders and longs for something, and she will find the answer.\*\*

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\*\* For Joe Starrett, his successes had so far been a marriage with a lovely wife, and having a wonderful son to watch grow up. He still had a long road of struggles ahead, working his homesteader claim and trying to make a living while yet trying to find a way to make the Valley a good place to raise a family. It was hard work that Starrett knew had to be done. But it was a good life to him, one worth living and one worth trying to make the best it could be.\*\*

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\*\* For ten years ago today, July fourth of the year 1889, Joe had married his wife Marian. The other homesteaders at the cheery outdoor gathering had come together and to congratulate the Starretts. Joe made a clumsy little speech and happily kissed his wife, to the delight of everyone present.\*\*

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\*\* Nobody noticed the man separated from the rest of the group, standing solemnly with the Starretts' son Joey, his arm on the boy's shoulder. No was paying attention as the man lowered his eyes, gazed forlornly out somewhere to his left, and then brought his eyes down at the moment of the kiss. This man was different from the rest of the men at the gathering. His physical appearance alone showed that he was something more than he was telling. This man was a man of strength; his slender build making him compact, and, if ever needed be, very powerful. This was also a man of many emotions. Bravery,

tenderness, loneliness, and just a touch of sadness made up the serene, all-encompassing expression that he wore. If you looked him in the eyes you would discover the wealth of things he was carrying with him: he was a man with a past that was haunting him, he had seen trouble in his life, and you could also see in his eyes also some sort of realization that he had long ago learned to live with. This was a man like no other. This was Shane.\*\*

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\*\* He had been riding out in the valley that summer, on his way to...somewhere... a place he hadn't been, when he came upon the Starrett's claim. He was wearing a fancy fringed leather suit with an equally fancy hat, and a gun the likes of which the Valley had never seen. Only one gun. It seemed there was more to Shane than what met the eye. Shane stayed with the Starretts as a hired hand to help with the farm. He had also thought to help the family with their problems with the cattle ranchers who wanted to drive them off their claim. The whole family took an immediate liking to him, and welcomed him. There was a special camaraderie between him and little Joey, who worshipped Shane's every move. It was a troubled time in his life, and nobody knew except the man himself. \*\*

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\*\* Independence Day had come around, and the homesteaders in the Valley had all gathered for a party. A party to celebrate their independence.\*\*

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\*\*JOE STARRETT\*\*

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\*\* The first dance of the evening, danced with Marian, had come to a

close and now all of the homesteading families had gathered together to congratulate Joe and Marian on their ten years of marriage. Joe stumbled out a little speech, and kissed his wife to the cheering and singing of the group.\*\*

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\*\* The men gathered around\*\* a few minutes later to share any news about Reiker, the rancher who was threatening the homesteaders to get them off their claims so that he would have grazing land for his cattle. They all felt that this situation was about to come to a head. In fact, Ernie Wright had already packed up his family and all his possessions in a wagon and left. This unnerved Joe. He refused the bottle of whiskey that was passed around. Then someone suggested that they should forget about Reiker for the day and just try and have a good time. \*\*\*\*

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\*\* The dance music was about to begin again, and the men with whom Joe had been talking went off, either to join in the dancing or to sample the picnic food. Joe just stood, leaning against the fence, watching nothing and no one in particular. The music started then, a little waltz. \*\*

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\*\* Joe looked for his wife Marian in the ring of dancers, and found her in graceful partnership with Shane. He was twirling her and managing the steps with an expertise that Starrett himself had never possessed. He saw the warm smile upon Shane's face as he gazed at Marian, and noticed that his eyes never left hers.\*\*

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\*\* As he watched more closely, Joe could see the transitions that showed in his wife's face. At first she had a pleasant, natural look, the plain look of someone enjoying the dance. Gradually he could see that she was finding it harder to look at Shane, until she could no longer bring her eyes to meet his. And then, towards the end of that waltz, she was gazing trancelike at the man, her face upturned almost expectantly.\*\*

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\*\* Joe felt his own smile that he had had when he first noticed Marian dancing with Shane melt into a frown. He realized that he didn't know any more, and this feeling suddenly shook him.

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\*\*Joe Starrett did not really know what he should tell himself. Thoughts he was ashamed of came rushing into his mind. \_That time last month at the dinner table, what did he mean when he said.....What went on that night of the fight after I'd gone to my room?.....What is she thinking now?.....Is this anything, or am I imagining things?.....But I've always known I could trust her.....\_\*\*

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\*\* SHANE\*\*

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\*\* Shane was struggling brutally with himself even as he was leading gentle Marian in the dance. \_Showing too much, he told himself--sadly. For he was a man never to show anything that came from deeper inside than that which could be seen. And this feeling was deep, deeper than anything he had felt before in his life. It wasn't a sad feeling right then, though. He almost felt like he was being lifted by something. Then why, he wondered, was something making him sad?\_\_\_\*\*

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\*\* Always with him it was...pride with himself for not showing or revealing anything. Now this quality that was so much a part of him had suddenly become a force frustrating him and bringing on new feelings--feelings he had built no defenses for, because he had not known they existed.\*\*

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\*\* God, it was something that could have caused Shane to burst into tears right there--something he had never done in his life. He felt Marian's hands in his own. He was overcome by the softness of them, their gentleness and yet their strength. This was a beautiful strength that he could feel whenever he was in Marian's presence. Her hands. He recalled the night when she had touched his hair and his face with those hands, caring for the cuts and bruises he had received in a fight with Reiker and his men. He would never forget how her hands felt then, so gentle and caring. Shane felt overwhelmed with some emotion he had no name for, but he knew it wanted him to get closer to her. He felt his fingers begin to interlock with hers as they held each other, still dancing. \*\*

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\*\* Then Shane felt something that made him draw back--the band of warm metal on Marian's finger.\*\*

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\*\*\_Mrs. Marian Starrett.\_\*\*

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\*\* Shane felt a downward plunge in the feelings that had been rising in his heart and up to his throat. How he did it he didn't know, but as he looked at Marian, he began slowly to come to realize his feelings. He wasn't ashamed of them and that was actually what scared him most. He felt alive, that something new and wonderful had entered his life. And then down in the depths of his soul he knew that it couldn't get anywhere, so it was like living on whiskey, stumbling trancelike in the dark. He didn't think, however, that he could ever get over how he felt towards her.\*\*

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\*\*MARIAN STARRETT\*\*

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\*\* She felt his strong arms leading her toward the ring of dancers. His strong, powerful, courageous arms...wrapped around her.\*\*

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\*\* At the outset of the dance, Marian found it easier to keep a neutral expression on her face because she could feel Joe watching her. But this feeling disappeared soon and her mind began to swim in a way that shut out everything else but Shane. She began to notice details of him that were always lost before...before she was this close to him.\*\*

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\*\* His eyes, a deep velvety brown, were gazing with so many expressions into hers. They were wondering...worrying...realizing...loving...and asking. Marian wanted to answer, to communicate with her own eyes, but was not sure of herself. She only knew one expression to give him that showed her feelings.\*\*

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\*\* Memories began to float through Marian's mind. Memories that were attached to feelings. The very first day he had come, she had been inside the house cooking supper. She had looked out the window, and...for a moment their eyes met. She couldn't remember if she had smiled, but she remembered how she had felt at that moment.\*\*

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\*\* And then the day of the fight in town. That night, how she had stroked and caressed his head and hair while caring for his wounds. She would not forget how her hands had trembled while holding the wet cloth, how her heart had beat so with a thousand passionate emotions.  
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\*\* Nor would she forget the way Shane had looked at her that night when he was standing out in the rain looking inside at her...his face so kind, so expectant, but at the same time so sad. \*\*

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\*\*It was the look that Shane bore now, as they were dancing. Marian felt so close to Shane--she was so close. She felt his hands on hers, his eyes on hers; she could feel him breathe. She could kiss him now, she could. She wanted to. She wanted to, and she was so close to him...Marian felt her eyes close, and maybe her head inched forward, and suddenly Shane's hands were gripping her tighter...\_\_\*\*

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\*\* And then she heard the music end, and people begin to cheer. It was as if she had suddenly awakened from a dreamy sleep--reality came snapping back to her. \*\*

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\*\* Her hands were still in Shane's. She heard his breaths, and noticed that they were ragged. She looked at Shane one last time, and he had a small smile on his face--it was almost a smile of reassurance. Marian returned the smile, and she dared to show in her eyes, outside, the intense longing she had felt inside for...who knew how long. She was then suddenly able to see the same look, the very same, in Shane's eyes.\*\*

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\*\* Then she saw Joe, her husband, approaching them. Marian very slowly let her hands slip from Shane's. The action gave her such a great pain in her heart that it was almost pain in her hands.

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\*\* Joe asked his wife, "May I have the next one?" And with that the music started and she was dancing with her husband, the one she had pledged everlasting devotion to ten years ago that very day. Suddenly her heart felt a new, dull pressure. She felt herself looking not at but through Joe, as if he were a ghost; not really there. She could see Shane, his back turned, walking out past the party into the lonely pasture.\*\*

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\*\*The dance was over, but the dream was not.\*\*

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